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**Policy Advisory Council
March 9, 2011
Draft Minutes**

Chair Paul Branson called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m. Members in attendance were Naomi Armenta, Cathleen Baker, Richard Burnett, JoAnn Busenbark, Carlos Castellanos, Bena Chang, Wilbert Din, Richard Hedges, Allison Hughes, Dolores Jaquez, Linda Jeffery Sailors, Randi Kinman, Federico Lopez, Marshall Loring, Cheryl O'Connor, Kendal Oku, Gerald Rico, Frank Robertson, Dolly Sandoval, and Egon Terplan. Excused: Yokia Mason. Absent: Evelina Molina and Lori Reese-Brown.

Chair Branson introduced the new members of the Policy Advisory Council: Sandi Galvez, Tanya Narath and Tina King Neuhausel.

Minutes

The minutes of the February 9, 2011 meeting were approved after a motion by Ms. Jeffery Sailors and a second by Mr. Loring. Ms. Galvez, Mr. Hedges, Ms. Narath and Ms. King Neuhausel abstained because they were not present at the February meeting.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Subcommittee Reports

Equity and Access Subcommittee

Subcommittee Chair Armenta announced that the recommendation to revise the scope of the SCS-RTP equity analysis was forwarded to the Commission in February. She said that the subcommittee will be discussing next steps with the subcommittee's leadership and with interested Commissioners.

Transit Sustainability Project Update

The Council received the report from Carolyn Clevenger of MTC's Programming and Allocations section. Mr. Hedges noted that four items mentioned in the work rules are controlled by state law, and cautioned that contracting out service might mean less or lower quality service. He also offered to share his research regarding paratransit service. Mr. Robertson expressed concern over the high operating costs, and asked what recommendations could be made in the near term to save money. Ms. Clevenger noted that staff has not made any recommendations in relation to the Transit Sustainability Project since they are still completing the analysis. Mr. Lopez noted that consolidation

Transit Sustainability Project Update (continued)

should be considered in order to improve financial efficiency, and added that it is most important to consider consolidation of paratransit services.

Ms. Jaquez asked why BART was not included in the operating costs chart. Ms. Clevenger clarified that the chart focuses on bus operators. Ms. Jaquez asked if VTA would be split since they offer light rail and bus services. Ms. Clevenger noted that the data are available both ways. Ms. Jaquez asked if Transbay service was considered. Ms. Clevenger noted that Transbay service is included as part of the regional service analysis. Ms. Jaquez asked what percent of the work costs are disability payments and if that data would be important to know. Ms. Clevenger agreed that staff could look into it. Ms. Jaquez asked what has been the response from the transit operators to the study. Ms. Clevenger said that the response has been mixed.

Mr. Castellanos asked if the wage comparison includes private shuttle services. Ms. Clevenger clarified that the data includes all employers nationally, not just transit providers. Mr. Castellanos asked if staff plans to conduct a comprehensive review of the East Bay. Ms. Clevenger said that analysis is planned for early fall. Mr. Castellanos asked if the administrative costs include maintenance staff. Ms. Clevenger said maintenance staff falls under a different category according to National Transit Database (NTD) data, and she added that staff will continue to do more analysis.

Ms. Jeffery Sailors cautioned against consolidation unless costs are carefully considered. Ms. Kinman said that the workers' compensation issue needs to be analyzed agency by agency. She also cautioned against comparing the costs of a large operator to those of a smaller system. She added that analyzing the connectivity between providers would determine how well the region is doing. Mr. Loring also stressed the importance of connectivity, especially in the paratransit element. He asked if there are Caltrain costs included in the figures for SamTrans. Ms. Clevenger said that the data is reported by the operators to the National Transit Database (NTD). Mr. Loring further commented that increasing transit ridership will help improve cost effectiveness. Ms. Baker asked if the analysis regarding the administrative costs per service unit would include the density of the surrounding land use. Ms. Clevenger said that staff is developing a transit competitiveness index analysis to address the issue of land use.

Ms. Galvez asked how the region compares to other national regions and whether the issue of consolidation would be considered. Ms. Clevenger noted that the Bay Area is unique in the nation in terms of the number of operators that share the service area. Ms. Clevenger added that staff is currently focusing on functional consolidation rather than consolidation of all the agencies. She said that creating one single agency is not necessarily the best answer. However, staff will continue to analyze the issue of connectivity. Ms. Sandoval asked for further clarification of what is included in the administrative costs. Ms. Clevenger said the data are exclusive of the drivers, and include all administrative support and maintenance staff. Ms. Sandoval suggested staff look at the work of VTA regarding workers' compensation. She also added that improving operations is different from improving efficiency and noted that the principles should be reworded to say "improve operations and efficiency."

Transit Sustainability Project Update (continued)

Ms. Hughes asked how cities were chosen in the comparisons. Ms. Clevenger noted that some were randomly selected and others were picked to compare regions that are more similar in size to the Bay Area. Mr. Terplan asked if the TSP would include an analysis of management. He added that management analysis is an important message to get out to the public. Ms. Clevenger said staff is looking into the work rules that management should already be enforcing, and working to identify areas where improvements could be made. Mr. Terplan asked if withholding funding due to lack of reform would be discussed, adding that there would likely be strong support for such a policy. Ms. Clevenger said that the goal is to create a reform and revenue strategy.

Mr. Terplan noted the importance of establishing performance targets at a regional level and including this as one of the principles. Executive Director Steve Heminger noted that the value of the TSP is that the region will have information we did not have before and putting this information in the hands of policy makers will be very important. He added that MTC's leverage will be on the funding, which will allow the Commission to insist on better performance. Mr. Terplan asked if consolidation of such things as procurement of new buses, IT, human resources, etc. would be considered. Mr. Heminger noted that the Commission does have some authority under state law relating to service coordination and functional consolidation that the Commission is not currently using. Mr. Terplan asked how the TSP would inform the Sustainable Communities Strategy. Ms. Clevenger said that as the detailed scenarios are developed for the SCS, one of the scenarios may focus on a robust transit system informed by the TSP analysis.

Ms. King Neuhausel asked which operators are considered the Big 7. Ms. Clevenger said Muni, BART, AC Transit, VTA, SamTrans, Caltrain and Golden Gate Transit/Ferry. Ms. King Neuhausel asked if consolidation would be considered in the peninsula area. Ms. Clevenger said staff is still considering how to evaluate consolidation. Mr. Heminger added that consolidation could increase costs if not analyzed properly. Ms. Kinman suggested consolidating standardized training. She also noted that efficiency needs to be better defined, and comparisons need to be made between similar agencies in order to avoid creating standards that rural operators cannot meet. Chair Branson noted the importance of maximizing quality of service, not just quantity. He added that technology is available that could help improve paratransit connectivity.

RTP/SCS Public Involvement Plans for Spring 2011

The Council received the report from Ellen Griffin of MTC's Legislation and Public Affairs section. Ms. Sandoval expressed concern that the public involvement plans did not include the call for projects for the RTP. She asked how the plans would integrate with the call for projects, and added that staff should state specifically what feedback they want from the public. Ms. Griffin noted that the call for projects is a related but separate process that takes place at the county level. Deputy Director for Policy Ann Flemer noted it is important for each member of the Policy Advisory Council to communicate with their congestion management agency (CMA) regarding the call for projects.

RTP/SCS Public Involvement Plans for Spring 2011 (continued)

Mr. Hedges asked if the telephone poll would include cellular phone users. Ms. Flemer said yes. Ms. Kinman suggested announcing meetings in the daily MTC headlines or via e-mail. Mr. Din said that CMAs are the key coordinators and encouraged members to check in with their CMA.

Ms. Baker asked what languages the OneBayArea Web site would be translated into. Ms. Griffin said key documents would be translated into Chinese and Spanish and noted that it is MTC's policy to include other languages upon request. She added that public workshops would be tailored to the language needs of each county. Ms. Baker asked how local level commissions (e.g., Planning Commissions) would be engaged. Ms. Griffin said staff welcomes ideas about who to reach out to. Ms. Flemer added that ideas for outreach to local commissions could also be forwarded to appropriate CMA staff. Mr. Robertson asked if staff planned to use public service announcements. Ms. Griffin said staff would look into the idea.

Mr. Terplan asked if staff planned to use social media and suggested that MTC staff contact staff from the City of San José to get ideas about this. Ms. Griffin noted that MTC is already using social media. Mr. Terplan asked how the relationship with Envision Bay Area (EBA) would work. Ms. Griffin noted that MTC is partnering with EBA on five of the county meetings and would be using the same tools for the remaining four counties. Mr. Terplan noted the importance of proper messaging to the public. Mr. Hedges encouraged members to contact their CMAs. Chair Branson noted that Marin has a mobility consortium where the CMA will be presenting information regarding the RTP/SCS.

Staff Liaison Report

Ms. Grove reviewed the items in her written report.

Council Member Reports

Ms. Jaquez announced that Chair Branson gave a presentation at the Sonoma County mobility management committee meeting. Ms. Chang announced that the Silicon Valley Leadership Group will be hosting a series of town hall meetings regarding Caltrain. Mr. Terplan announced that the San Francisco Planning + Urban Research (SPUR) Association will be hosting a debate with the Bay Citizen and a discussion between the executive directors of the four Bay Area regional agencies, including Mr. Heminger. Ms. Baker announced there will be a presentation on healthy and active aging in San Mateo County.

New Business

Mr. Hedges suggested a future agenda item could be a presentation on the effects of losing redevelopment agencies. Ms. Kinman noted that it would be good to know how this affects agenda topics that are currently in the pipeline.

Adjournment/Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for April 13, 2011. The meeting was adjourned at 3:19 p.m.